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ABSTRACT

This document addresses issues related to the problem that many U.S. citizens do not have literacy skills adequate to meet their needs and ambitions. The first section of the paper provides an overview of the problem, discussing how to define literacy, how it has been measured, some estimates of how many people are illiterate, who they are and where they are located. Intergenerational and cultural illiteracy, effects of illiteracy on the workplace, and literacy in the military are also discussed. The second section of the paper highlights the types of literacy services available and their major providers. Advocacy, awareness, information, and referral services are discussed. Federal programs are described, as are programs provided by libraries, by the Laubach Literacy Action organization and the Literacy Volunteers of America organization, by community development agencies, by churches, by community colleges and universities, by business and labor, and by the military. The third section of the paper addresses issues related to delivery of literacy services. Patterns of participation, materials and instructional approaches, use of volunteers in literacy programs, professionalism, and coordination among agencies are discussed. Concluding the paper is a listing of addresses and telephone numbers of 22 agencies and organizations that work in the adult literacy area. A 54-item reference list is included. (CML)

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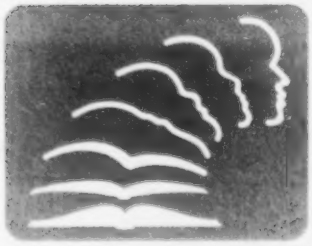

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ADULT LITERACY IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY

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There are many Americans who do not have literacy skills adequate to meet their needs and ambitions. This is a problem that has become the focus of much concern and a growing level of action throughout the country. This paper addresses some of the issues related to the problem. The first section gives an overview of the problem in the United States today. The second part discusses how the problem is being attacked. The third part identifies some issues related to the delivery of literacy services. The fourth section provides the addresses and phone numbers of many of the agencies mentioned throughout the paper.

Overview

This section serves as an introduction to and an overview of some of the issues surrounding the problem of illiteracy in the United States today. These issues include how to define literacy, how it has been measured, and some estimates of how many people are "illiterate" in society today, who they are and where they are located. Other issues central to the problem will also be discussed.

Defining Literacy

In its simplest definition, literacy is the ability to read and write. Illiteracy typically refers to the state of not having mastered the basic skills of reading: recognizing letters, decoding, and encoding. In recent years, the concept of functional literacy has also been discussed. A more complex issue, it refers to the ability to complete tasks necessary to function in one's environment. The person classified as not functionally literate has often mastered letter recognition and word recognition; the tasks he or she faces usually require more than the ability to recognize a few simple words and sign one's name, however. They may include tasks necessary to get by in daily life, such as reading street signs in an unfamiliar neighborhood or reading the insert that comes with the phone bill. They may include tasks necessary to get by on the job, such as reading a set of blueprints. They also include tasks that the individual desires to be able to complete because they make his or her life more fulfilling, such as reading the newspaper or novels. It is now being realized that what constitutes "literacy" will vary with the context in which a person is functioning; for example, as a worker, citizen, consumer, or parent. Functional definitions of literacy also imply that as people move or society changes, literacy needs of individuals will change (Harman, 1985; 1987).

Workplace literacy has become a national priority as American businesses and industries attempt to improve their productivity and remain competitive with other nations. As technology continues to rapidly change, the ability of workers to keep up with changes will require not only basic literacy skills but also higher-order skills, perhaps most importantly the ability to constantly learn new jobs and skills.

Ways Literacy Has Been Measured

The question of how to define and measure adult literacy remains a problem today. In the past, completion of an arbitrary grade in school (usually fourth or fifth; sometimes high school graduation) was taken as an indication that the person was literate. These standards mean little; it is evident that some high school graduates do not possess sufficient skills to cope in today's society (Levine, 1982). Even adults who graduate from high school may find that their skills atrophy if they do not use them for many years.

Another criterion has been reading level as expressed in grade level equivalents. Standardized reading tests yield grade equivalent scores normed on children and are probably not applicable to adults (Harman, 1985). Adults may be demoralized when they are told that they do not read as well as a fourth grader.

Measures of adult functional competence reflect the idea of functional literacy. These measures are constructed by defining a set of skills necessary for adult functioning, based on particular environment; they are then used to test people on this set of skills.

Recent Statistics On Illiteracy in the United States

Bureau of the Census Studies

Since 1840, literacy rates have been reported every decade on the basis of census figures. Rates are calculated by asking people how many years of school they have completed; an individual who has completed the fourth or fifth grade level is counted as literate (Harman, 1987). These estimates of literacy are typically high; in

1982, only 8.3% of the population 25 years of age and older had not completed elementary school, and only 3% had less than 4 years of schooling (Bogue, 1985).

National Studies

Many national studies have been undertaken to determine how many individuals are illiterate. These studies use the functional competency definition of literacy. The Adult Performance Level (APL) Study, funded by the United States Office of Education, found that at least 23 million Americans may not be functionally literate (Northcutt, 1975). The English Language Proficiency Survey (ELPS) was developed by the United States Department of Education and administered by the Bureau of the Census; between 17 and 21 million adults were classified as illiterate according to this test (U.S. Department of Education, 1986). Most recently, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) conducted by Educational Testing Service found that 50% of the young adults tested (ages 21-25) were "mid-level" literates as defined by their performance on the range of tasks presented to them. These young adults had difficulties with the complex information processing skills required by tasks at the upper end of the scale, such as scanning for information, interpreting information, identifying a theme, or generating prose related to an idea. These skills characterize the complex thinking that is required in today's society (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986; Venezky, Kaestle, & Sum, 1987). It is estimated that the pool of individuals with inadequate literacy skills is growing by 2.3 million per year, including dropouts, immigrants, and refugees (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984).

Who Are The Low-literate Adults?

Of the most recent national surveys, only the ELPS provides a cutoff score below which individuals are defined to be illiterate. The NAEP has no such cutoff score. For this reason, data from the ELPS describing those found to be illiterate will be discussed along with data on educational achievement which is often used as a criterion for literacy.

According to ELPS, of all adults classified as illiterate, 56% were under the age of 50 and 37% spoke a non-English language at home. Among native English speakers classified as illiterate, 70% did not finish high school, 42% had no earnings in the previous year and 35% were in their 20's and 30's. Among illiterate adults who used a non-English language, 82% were born outside of the United States and 21% had entered the U.S. within the past six years (U.S. Department of Education, 1986).

The undereducated in the U.S. are primarily the poor and racial and ethnic minorities. Across all levels of education, Blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Mexican Americans rank lower in achievement than majority group members (Bogue, 1985; Hodgkinson, 1985).

The young and the old also tend to be among the educationally disadvantaged. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1985) reports that 35% of adults 60-65 years of age are not functionally literate. The percentage of adults who have completed less than eight years of school rises with age (Bogue, 1985). As already mentioned, the NAEP study showed that many adults between the ages of 21 and 25 have mastered mid-level,but not higher level, literacy skills.

Those in prisons tend to be undereducated. Three million adults in the U.S. are incarcerated, on parole, or on probation. Corrections officials and the American public

are increasingly aware that an inadequate education may exacerbate the problems of these individuals (Project Literacy U. S. & Correctional Education Association, 1989). The Correctional Education Association estimated that 60% of inmates could not read, write, and compute at the third grade level (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984). The National Institute of Corrections (NIC), the education division of the U.S. Department of Justice, reported in 1986 that 50% of adults in federal and state prisons could not read or write at all. Nearly two-thirds of them had not completed high school; one quarter had not completed elementary school (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1986). Only 20% of inmates are currently enrolled in some type of educational program (Project Literacy U.S. and Correctional Education Association, 1989).

Two populations have become a new focus of concern: the American workforce and the homeless. Seventy-five percent of the American workforce for the year 2000 are adults today and 80% of the workforce new entrants will be minorities, women and immigrants (Chisman, 1989; Johnston & Packer, 1987) As such, training and retraining must be targeted toward the needs of older and educationally disadvantaged learners.

Attention is now being paid to the needs of the homeless. It has been estimated by the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington that there are approximately 3 million homeless people in the United States, although some reports indicate larger numbers, and the number is growing.

The role of literacy in helping to reduce the number of homeless is rather controversial as the correlation between homelessness and illiteracy has not yet been determined. The experiences of many city programs has indicated that a lack of basic literacy skills

is common within this population and that this educational disadvantage is a barrier to securing better paying jobs (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1988).

Where Are The Low-literate Adults?

Persons in our society who lack sufficient reading and writing skills to function effectively are found in large numbers wherever there are poor people and congregated racial and ethnic minority groups. They are found in city ghettos and on unmechanized farms. More undereducated adults live in urban areas; this seems logical due to the higher concentration of people in these areas overall. The ELPS found that of all adults classified as illiterate, 41% live in central cites of metropolitan areas, compared to 8% in rural areas, and there are more educationally disadvantaged individuals in the south and east than in the north and west (U.S. Department of Education, 1986).

Intergenerational and Cultural Illiteracy

Children of adults whose literacy skills are inadequate for the tasks in which they need to or wish to participate may also grow up to have inadequate literacy skills; the pattern may span generations (Sticht, 1983, 1987). Cycles of illiteracy are intergenerational in nature (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1984; Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986; Segalman, 1981; Thompson, 1985). As one indication of this effect, parents who drop out of school are more likely to have children who drop out of school. The value that family members place on literacy may influence the level that family members aim to attain and eventually achieve, regardless of the availability of or

participation in services. However, the relationship among influencing factors is complex; various cognitive and affective measures related to school achievement appear to be strongly related to the mother's (but not the father's) level of educational attainment (Laosa, 1982). Likewise, the value that the culture places on literacy may influence the level that members aim to attain and eventually achieve, again regardless of the availability of, or level of participation in, services (Harman, 1987).

Effects of Illiteracy on the Workplace

Individuals with inadequate literacy skills have long been blamed for causing problems in the workplace ranging from wasted investment in new equipment to productivity difficulties to outright safety hazards (Hymowitz, 1981). All indications are that these problems will continue. According to Johnston & Packer (1987), the new workers who will join the labor force between now and the year 2000 are not well-matched to the advancing skill requirements of jobs in the changing economy. These jobs are demanding more education and higher levels of language, math, and reasoning skills. At the same time, the average age of the workforce is rising, and the pool of young workers entering the labor market is shrinking. Minorities, immigrants and women represent a growing portion of new workers. Many of these new workers are educationally disadvantaged. Occupational changes will continue to challenge disadvantaged workers. Cost to business and industry will continue to be high due to training or productivity losses (see also Collino, Aderman, & Askov, 1988).

There is currently little evidence for a direct relationship between basic skills and job performance (Stedman & Kaestle, 1987; Sticht & Mickulecky, 1984). However, a relationship between job performance and the ability to use reading,

writing, and computational skills critically has been documented. Mickulecky and Ehlinger (1986) found that top-performing supervisors, workers, and trainees in an electronics firm were better able to identify key concepts, summarize key ideas, and provide details related to key concepts. New jobs apparently require, and employers apparently want, workers who are able to engage in more complex skills, including problem solving, critical thinking, communication, and interpersonal skills. Workers also increasingly need the flexibility and skills to keep up with changing jobs (Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1988).

Literacy in the Military

Every year, Armed Forces applicants are selected through an extensive aptitude and ability testing program which includes paragraph comprehension and vocabulary subtests. The median reading grade level of entering recruits is 9.5 (Sticht, 1982; 1986). Approximately 40% read below the ninth grade level and 6% read below a seventh grade level (Duffy, 1983). Sachar and Duffy (1975) found that literacy skills were unrelated to nonacademic performance in recruit training; they did predict success in academic phases of recruit training, however. Text is central to the technical skill training program. Thus, there are significant literacy demands in a military career (Duffy, 1983); again, these appear to be in applications of basic literacy skills.

What Is Being Done to Combat Illiteracy?

This section highlights the types of literacy services available and their major providers. Effective adult literacy programs, edited by Renee Lerche (1985), provides

an overview of how literacy programs structure aspects of their program operation and management to meet their objectives. It synthesizes the findings of the National Adult Literacy Project, a U.S. Government- funded study.

Advocacy, Awareness, Information, Referral Services

The Adult Literacy Initiative was established within the U.S. Department of Education in 1983 to increase public awareness of the literacy problem and to enhance existing services. It was mandated to coordinate Federal literacy programs in the Department of Education and to promote private sector involvement in this area (Kahn, 1986). The Adult Literacy Initiative. publishes the ALI Update, which provides current information on major literacy activities. FICE (Federal Interagency Committee on Education) provides information and recommendations and assists in coordinating and supporting this government-wide initiative.

The Coalition for Literacy is a group of national literacy and adult education organizations whose goal is to conduct a nationwide multimedia campaign to focus attention on the problem of illiteracy and link existing services with new resources at the local, state, and national level. Founded by the American Library Association, the Coalition completed a three year public service advertising campaign in 1987 and continues to operate a toll-free literacy information and referral hotline. The Business Council for Effective Literacy (BCEL) was formed in late 1983 to encourage business and industry to join the effort to promote literacy. They provided a $400,000 grant to help launch the national awareness campaign jointly sponsored by the Coalition for Literacy and the Advertising Council in the fall of 1984 (Harman, 1985). One act of this three year campaign was to give tutors and potential corporate donors local and

national call-in numbers to make it easier for them to donate time or services (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984). The Business Council for Effective Literacy played a major role in encouraging the Jump start study released in 1989 (Chisman, 1989) and continues to produce publications and a newsletter. The Library of Congress is expanding the scope of its National Referral Service to include current information about organizations nationwide concerned with reading and literacy development. The information is available by telephone and mail (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984).

Project Literacy U.S (PLUS) is a joint public service campaign being undertaken by Capital Cities/ABC and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). The goals of the PLUS plan include: generating community action programs to deal locally with literacy issues; emphasizing awareness-raising about the problem through on-air radio and television programming; and using programming to encourage those who need help to seek it. In addition, Contact Literacy Center, Lincoln, Nebraska, is the national information and referral service for the Coalition for Literacy with links to thousands of community projects, service agencies, and planning groups around the U.S. (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984).

The Assault on Illiteracy Program (AOIP) is a volunteer coalition of over 90 national Black-led organizations which focuses its efforts on eliminating illiteracy among disadvantaged minorities. It provides support for tutors and teachers and promotes achievements of Black communities.

The Urban Literacy Network is a national organization which supports and enhances literacy policies and programs in and for urban areas. The Network developed a computerized national literacy clearinghouse and resource file in partnership with United Way of America and the Literacy Assistance Center in New York. It also held the January, 1988 National Conference on Urban Literacy.

Federal Programs

Programs Provided Through the Adult Education Act

The federal government is the largest provider of programs in basic skills for adults. Through the Adult Education Act, first enacted in 1966 and amended several times since, monies are made available to the states for the purpose of conducting Adult Basic Education (ABE), high school equivalency (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. ABE classes are targeted at adults who wish to work on very basic skills (often equated with the 0-4 grade level). High school equivalency courses are targeted at at those seeking to complete secondary education. They may obtain certification known as the GED (General Equivalency Diploma) Certificate. The test for the GED has just been revised, and the new test was put into use in January, 1988. This test includes an essay-writing portion. The American Council on Education publishes a newsletter called GED Items, which keeps readers up to date on issues relevant to GED testing. Their monographs provide useful information related to the GED. ESL courses are provided to those new immigrants who must master English. The programs provide language skills as well as an introduction to American society. Enrollment in 1985 was estimated to be 2.6 million people, 25% of whom were enrolled in GED courses, 50% in ESL classes, and the remainder in ABE classes. However, the programs conducted under the jurisdiction of the Adult Education Act served only 3-4% of those in need (Harman, 1985).

The public school system is also a major provider under the Adult Education Act. Courses may be provided to the community, usually in conjunction with ABE. Usually the role of the school is to make space available and encourage the

participation of parents. Some schools have acted independently to organize courses. The extent of such activity is unknown (Harman, 1985). In 1987, almost 3 million Americans participated in programs funded by the Adult Education Act.

Programs Provided Through Federal Agencies

In addition to the programs conducted by the Adult Education Act, the federal government provides for instruction through other frameworks - the military, prisons (federal and state) and job training programs for unemployed youth are some examples. In 1985, it was estimated that approximately 300,000 people participated each year in activities conducted within these frameworks (Harman, 1985).

The Literacy Management Information Project Report (Kahn, 1986) identified 79 literacy related programs administered by 14 Federal agencies. For Fiscal Year 1985, these programs were able to identify $347.6 million which had been used for literacy activities. Eight of the 79 programs were designated as primary providers of literacy services - literacy is stated as a priority objective in the program's authorizing legislation. Forty-four were considered to be secondary providers (literacy-related projects are approved activities that support the primary objective of the program); while 27 were indirect providers (no explicit legislative mandate exists for literacy activities in these programs - a separate policy decision is required to fund literacy activities).

The fourteen federal agencies include: ACTION; Agriculture; Appalachian Regional Commission; Defense; Education; Health and Human Services; Housing and Urban Development; Interior; Justice; Labor; Library of Congress; Tennessee Valley Authority; Transportation; and Veterans. Only two agencies were primary providers of literacy programs; they were Education and Justice, with four primary programs

each. Education provided the most programs (29) while Health and Human Services provided the second most programs (12).

Nature of Literacy Programs in the Federal Agencies.

Many programs focus on helping individuals gain skills to help obtain employment or to live independently. Nineteen programs in seven agencies have job training programs with basic skills components. Eleven Federal programs help the disabled and handicapped gain life skills. The Department of Education addresses adult literacy directly in its Adult Education program, which provides formula grants to states. The Department also funds vocational training programs containing basic skills components; bilingual education programs; and programs for the handicapped and learning disabled. The Department also is responsible for the Adult Literacy Initiative. The Department of Health and Human Service's Head Start program initiated a parent enrichment program to focus on the educational needs of pre-schoolers' parents. HHS also has programs which address the needs of refugees, the aging, the handicapped, and the disabled. Literacy activities could also be carried out under HHS' Social Services Block Grant and Community Development Block Grant. The Armed Services conduct basic skills courses as part of their training programs. Federal prisons sponsor literacy programs. Several programs operating in correctional institutions are described in a recent publication by P.L.U.S. and the Correctional Education Association (1989). ACTION has made literacy one of the priorities of its volunteer programs through its VISTA Literacy Corps. Basic skills training is provided as part of the employment and training programs administered by the Department of Labor. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grants spend money on public services including

literacy programs. Library programs, including the Library of Congress, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Services, and the Department of Education's library programs, serve as the focal point and initiator of literacy programs.

There have been many recent developments in the form of legislation and programs. In August of 1987, the Reauthorization of the Adult Education Act was proposed. Vice-President Dan Quayle, then U.S. Senator, endorsed the Reauthorization in 1987 with S. 1229 which extended the Adult Education Act for four additional years ending in 1992. His based his support for the Reauthorization on the link between literacy and the productivity of workers.

"School, College and University Partnerships", under the Higher Education Act of 1965, encourages the building of partnerships between higher education institutions and secondary schools serving low-income students. The purpose of the partnerships is to support programs that improve the academic skills of students and thereby increase the opportunity for continued education and employment..

The Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988 are amendments to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. These amendments include a variety of new programs such as: The Fund for the Improvement and Reform of Schools and Teaching (FIRST) and the Even Start Program. FIRST, although focusing on elementary and secondary education reform, stresses the need for parental involvement in the educational process. The Even Start Program supports the development of family-centered education programs to help parents become full partners in the the education of their children and to provide literacy training for parents in the program.

The Education for a Competitive America Act (S. 406) was enacted to increase authorization in several existing federal programs and to authorize new federal programs to strengthen the competitiveness of American industry. It was intended as a part of the Omnibus Trade legislation and includes three literacy initiatives: 1) the Literacy Corps Assistance Act, 2) the Workplace Literacy Assistance Program, and 3) the Technology Education Act.

The Literacy Corps Assistance Act, as originally proposed by U.S. Senator Kennedy, was modeled after the Washington Education Project. As a part of the Omnibus Trade Bill (1988), the Literacy Corps Act provides funding for start-up grants for colleges and universities to establish literacy corps programs on campus. The literacy corps concept is a solution to the need for well trained volunteer tutors in adult literacy programs. College students are recruited and trained in a three-credit college course as volunteers.

The Workplace Literacy Assistance Program funds small demonstration projects that are designed as partnerships between businesses, labor organizations, or private industry councils and state or local educational agencies, higher education institutions or schools. The purpose of the partnership is to provide the necessary education needed to enable workers to improve their competency and upgrade their skills.

The Technology Education Act funds projects that offer instruction in fundamental knowledge of technology and its applications to current systems.

The Library Service and Construction Act initiated Title VI, the Library Literacy Program in 1985. This program supports the development of state and local library services focusing on the needs of low-literate adults.

Jump start: The federal role in adult literacy, a report released by the Southport Institute for Policy Analysis in January of 1989, examined the federal government's

role in adult literacy. Chisman recommends that the government "jump-start" a national movement to upgrade the basic skills of Americans in order to increase productivity in the workplace and to improve social functioning. Chisman finds that national literacy efforts do not include enough systematic research or evaluation of ideas, that there is not enough training and support for instructors, and that organizations are politically weak and fragmented (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1989). Jump start recommends that a new bill, the Adult Basic Skills Education Act of 1989, be enacted to provide a stronger intellectual and information base and to provide federal incentives for training basic skills instructors and developing instruction using technology. Another purpose of the proposed Act would be to strengthen the ability of states to coordinate and upgrade the delivery of adult basic skills services (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1989). In order to maximize the effectiveness of the new Act, Jump start includes suggested amendments to current programs to support the federal effort. The JOB Training Partnership Act (JTPA), The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act, The Adult Education Act (ABE), The Family Support Act of 1988 (Welfare Reform), The Even Start Program and VISTA have been targeted toward the establishment of a national initiative (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1989). Jump start is the first study and analysis of its kind, researched and presented by an independent and nonpartisan source (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1989).

Other Programs

Libraries

There are over 15,000 libraries in the United States. Libraries have been working against illiteracy since the 1920's (Business Council for Effective Literacy,

1986a). Guided by their national association, the American Library Association (ALA), many have made facilities available for programs, initiated instruction on their own, and have worked in cooperation with other literacy providers. ALA was instrumental in founding the Coalition for Literacy (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984). Libraries are well-positioned to play a large role in literacy programming: they are the center of many community activities; unlike schools, they do not remind adults of past failure; in addition, going to the library may seem more prestigious than going to an elementary or secondary school for night classes. Much of their potential remains untapped, however. Recently, the U.S. Department of Education reported that only one-half of the states had any library literacy programs in operation, and Contact Literacy Center reported that only 467 public libraries nationwide conducted some type of literacy work (Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1986a).

LVA and LLA

Laubach Literacy Action (LLA) and Literacy Volunteers of America (LVA) are two national, independent voluntary organizations. Laubach, started in 1929, operates through over 500 local councils around the country and has 50,000 volunteer tutors who work with an estimated 60,000 adults, mostly in small groups or individually. A central national office in Syracuse, New York provides a certification program for new volunteers and provides local affiliates with instructional materials published by Laubach. LVA was formed in 1967 and also operates out of Syracuse. It operates through 200 local offices, and uses approximately 15,000 tutors to train 21,000 adults. Tutors are trained and certified before they begin. The local affiliates receive technical assistance and instructional materials from the central office as well as the state-level organizations with which they are associated. Volunteers associated with

both organizations function either independently or in conjunction with other groups (Harman, 1985).

Community Development Agencies

The Association for Community Based Education (ACBE) has attempted to organize independent community groups providing adult education services. In 1985, it was estimated that 35,000 to 53,000 people were being served in literacy classes supported by ACBE members. Some of these classes are held in conjunction with other organizations, such as LVA or ABE (Harman, 1985). Member institutions include accredited colleges, economic development organizations, adult learning programs, literacy projects and advocacy organizations (Williams, 1989).

Churches

Churches may be among the organizations counted by ACBE. Church efforts that are national in scope include those undertaken by the Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Williams, 1989). Their Volunteer Reading Aids Program recruits and trains tutors, and provides technical and consulting services. The Southern Baptist Convention's national literacy program is 30 years old. Five-hundred workshop leaders serve as literacy tutors (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984). Most activity is conducted in local churches, thus information on programs and participation data is difficult to obtain (Harman, 1985). The Association of Church and Synagogue Libraries has developed a literacy and reading training project for its members (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984).

Community Colleges and Universities

Community colleges may provide facilities for programs run by other groups, such as LVA, LLA, and ABE, and so some of these may by counted by ACBE. However, many community colleges also run classes for entering students who have been found to have severe problems in basic skills and require remediation in these areas. As many as half of the entering students may require basic skills remediation. Many universities are also providing (and even requiring) remediation in basic skills for those students who are found to have deficiencies. At UCLA, up to 60% of entering freshman in 1982 failed the English proficiency exam (Rouche, Baker, & Rouche, 1984). Although precise numbers have not been estimated, several million people a year may be served through this vehicle (Harman, 1985). Other types of programs are also being carried out in these settings. At Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, N.C., a project called ABLE (Adult Basic Literacy Education) is examining the use of computers and other technologies in instructing adults in basic skills. In the U.S. Department of Education's College Work Study Program, students are trained and paid to assist in local literacy programs (Joint Committee on the Library, 1984).

Recently, a movement to enlist college students to volunteer their talents in the fight against illiteracy has been underway. The literacy corps concept was originally established at the University of Miami where Norman Manasa, enrolled as a an undergraduate, developed a program for college students to volunteer as tutors in local prisons and Head Start programs. Following his graduation from the university, Manasa became Director of the Washington Education Project. The purpose of the Washington Education Project has been to raise funds from major corporations to establish college and university literacy corps programs. Senator Kennedy's Literacy

Corps Assistance Act was modeled after Manasa's program and became part of the 1988 Omnibus Trade Bill.

The Pennsylvania Literacy Corps Pilot Program, coordinated by the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy, has developed a three credit college course that was available to Penn State students during the Spring 1989 semester. The course, Adult Literacy: Focus on Volunteers, offered college students an opportunity to explore adult education as a career option, to fine-tune their own basic skills (including critical thinking and study skills) while teaching adults with low skill levels and to become involved as a volunteer. The course required 60 hours of volunteer service with a local literacy program. Volunteer service options included, but were not limited to, tutoring. The program encouraged students to volunteer their own talents and expertise to meet the needs of the literacy program.

Business and Labor

Research conducted by educators in the military services points to the need for job-specific literacy programs in efforts to increase workplace literacy (Philippi, 1988; Sticht, 1987). However, there is little job-specific workplace literacy training going on. Baar-Kessler (1984) surveyed 100 Fortune 500 companies to assess the extent to which they were involved in literacy training. She found only a small amount of literacy training and little potential for increased future activity. Most of the training, however, appeared to be geared toward improving job performance through the refinement of job-related literacy skills. Sticht and Mickulecky (1984) found that employers are training employees at all levels (not just entry-level) in job-specific literacy skills (i.e. management training in communication skills or technical training in blueprint or machine operation job sheets).

Labor unions have sponsored basic skills programs using monies from education funds that accumulate through contributions from employees and from membership dues. Locals, central union efforts, and the education department of the AFL-CIO have all participated in such programs. Some of the activities are conducted in conjunction with other providers, often through union educational programs conducted in-house. Evidence indicates that these efforts are supported but not very widespread. Estimates of participation range from 20,000 - 100,000 (Harman, 1985).

The Military

For almost half a century, the U.S. military services have incorporated formal literacy programs into job training. The military first began to explore job-specific literacy instruction when studies showed that general instruction in reading skills did not significantly improve service members' job performance. Three highly successful job-specific reading programs are now used in the military: the Army Functional Literacy Program (FLIT), the Navy Experimental Functional Skills Program in Reading (XFSP/READ), and the Army Basic Skills Educational Program (BSEP) Reading (Philippi, 1988; see also Sticht, 1987).

Issues Related to Delivery of Services

This section will highlight some other important issues related to delivery of literacy services.

Patterns of Participation

Literacy programs have a pattern of participation that may restrict achievement. Individuals may attend several classes, then stop coming, either to return several classes later or not at all. Dropout rates in literacy programs are around 50%. In addition, individuals who drop out of one program may be apt to join another program and be counted as another individual served when in reality the same person is being served by several programs at different times. Since many times literacy programs are joint efforts by many organizations (for example a Laubach-trained tutor many be working in a prison program), double-counting of participants often occurs; the same person is counted as being served by two or more programs. This makes the numbers of individuals being served by all programs seem higher than they really are (Harman, 1985).

Materials and Instructional Approaches

Many materials used with adult students have been designed for use with children. Others, although they have been designed for adults, take an approach much like children's beginning reading books (for example, the Laubach materials). Some exceptions include: the APL curriculum designed by the University of Texas and still used in some programs today; CASAS (California Adult Student Assessment System) and the CCP (Comprehensive Competencies Program) (Taggart, 1986). CASAS enables adult educators to develop and evaluate a life skills curriculum for competency-based programs (Rickard, 1981). CCP covers academic competencies as well as functional competencies. Research and development of materials specifically designed

for adults is needed immediately. Recently, the importance of providing instruction within the context which skills will be used has been emphasized (Sticht, 1987). Literacy skills are most likely to be successfully applied when they are taught as part of tasks learners will need to perform. This concept is having particular impact on workplace literacy programs. Computer-assisted instruction and other technologies (i.e. videodisc) hold promise for adult instruction, as indicated by the success of the Penn State Adult Literacy Courseware (Askov, Maclay, & Bixler, 1988; Askov, Maclay, & Bixler, 1986; Maclay & Askov, 1988), the IBM PALS program (IBM, 1987) and the Wisher Program (Levine & McFadden, 1987).

Kazemek (1988) argues for the need to re-evaluate the traditional method of delivering adult literacy instruction (tutor and student working one-on-one). According to Kazemek, those in the field of adult literacy must (1) change their attitudes, which are often demeaning, toward adult literacy learners; (2) realize that what constitutes literacy is relative to the environment of the adult, rather than a set of basic skills or abilities; and, (3) realize that literacy is a politically charged issue. He suggests that teachers and tutors of adult literacy be made aware of the social nature of literacy by introducing them to alternative teaching and learning strategies. For example, tutors should be encouraged to shift from one-to-one teaching to small group instruction or peer instruction centering on issues relevant to the group, such as community problems. Kazemek believes that the needs of adult literacy students would be better served by such instructional methods and focus, and may lead to better retention of students in programs.

Use of Volunteers in Literacy Programs

Volunteers provide a common thread among literacy programs; many programs rely on volunteers to do their jobs. However, two myths surround the use of volunteers in literacy programs. The first is that by recruiting and training enough volunteers the problem of illiteracy will be solved. The social problems perpetuating illiteracy are too complex to be solved so easily. The second is that donated time is cost-free or low-cost. A successful volunteer program involves proper training, managing, and support of volunteers, all of which involve cost (Chisman, 1989; Kangisser, 1985).

Professionalism

Although training for literacy tutors is scant or non-existent (Harman, 1985), professionalism in the field is increasing (Kangisser, 1985). Training programs are becoming more elaborate and tutors are comparing methods and experiences through avenues such as conferences. This is crucial because folklore or intuition is not sufficient to use in approaching adult instruction. Teaching adults is different than teaching children; we are only beginning to learn about methods and materials appropriate for adult instruction.

Coordination Among Agencies

One of the trends in providing literacy services that will undoubtedly continue into the future is the coordination among federal and state agencies in providing literacy services. An example of this is a project called GAIN in California, in which

literacy classes are required for an individual before he or she can draw unemployment if he or she has been found to have inadequate literacy skills. This trend could result in better and more efficient service of individual needs. Cooperation among agencies is an important factor in the successful provision of literacy services.

The Gannett Foundation provided funding for the development of state level coalitions for adult literacy beginning in 1985. This Foundation's support has helped state coalitions promote adult literacy activities within their states and provide a framework for the development of comprehensive state plans for improving adult literacy levels. In addition to state level coalitions, local literacy coalitions are forming in some areas of the country. Most coalitions include representatives from various sectors of the community including literacy and adult education, business and industry, labor organizations and associations, social and welfare agencies and schools and higher education institutions. The mission of most local literacy coalitions is sharing and networking of resources and joint planning and development of community and workplace literacy programs.

Agencies

ABLE

Central Piedmont Community College

P.O. Box 35009 Charlotte, N.C. 28235

704-373-6971

ACBE (Association for Community Based Education)

1806 Vernon St., N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20009

202-462-6333

ACTION (Vista Literacy Corps)

806 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20525

202-634-9135

Adult Literacy Initiative

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue N.W.,

Washington, D.C. 20202

202-732-2959

American Federation of Labor - Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)
815 Sixteenth St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006
202-637-5144

American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle, Suite 20
Washington, D.C. 20036-1193

American Library Association
50 East Huron St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312-944-6780

Assault on Illiteracy Program (AOIP)
410 Central Park West (PH-C)
New York, NY 10025
212-967-4008

BCEL (Business Council for Effective Literacy)
1221 Avenue of the Americas, 35th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10020
212-512-2415

Coalition for Literacy
50 East Huron St.
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312-944-6780

Contact Literacy Center
P.O. Box 81826
Lincoln, NE 68501-1826
402-464-0602

GAIN
San Diego Community College District
ABE Resource Teacher
5350 University Avenue
San Diego, CA 92105
619-230-2144

Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy
248 Calder Way, Suite 307
University Park, PA 16801
814-863-3777

LLA (Laubach Literacy Action)

Box 131

1320 Jamesville Avenue

Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

315-422-9121

LVA (Literacy Volunteers of America, Incorporated)

5795 Widewaters Parkway

Syracuse, N.Y. 13214

315-445-8000

National Commission on Libraries and Information Sciences

1111 Eighteenth St., N.W., Suite 310

Washington, D.C. 20036

202-254-3100

Project Literacy U.S. (PLUS)

4802 Fifth Avenue,

Pittsburgh, PA 15213

412-622-1492

United States Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20202

202-245-3192

United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

United States Department of Labor
601 D St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20213

Urban Literacy Network
7505 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435
612-893-7661

Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America
8765 West Higgins Road
Chicago, Illinois 60631
312-380-2736

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